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INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Merger of the POD and the PAR into POR

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1. In El Salvador, the Partido de Orientacion Democratica (POD) has recently been fused with the political party of Col. Jose Asencio Menendez, the Partido Accion Renovadora (PAR), at the instigation of the POD. The committee named by the POD, consisting of Amilcar Martinez, Abelardo Torres, and Ulises Flores, met with Raul Camero, Raul Anaya, and Col. Rodolfo Morales of the PAR. (Col. Menendez has withdrawn from his party to give it complete freedom of action.) The new party formed will be called the Partido de Orientacion Revolucionaria (POR).
2. The merger of the two parties is still incomplete in the sense that all members have not accepted it. There are still those who call themselves Podistas and those who call themselves Paristas. The merger seems to be effective in so far as the student sectors of both parties are concerned, and the merger of the departmental committees is apparently complete. The labor sector of the POD continues to hold back, no doubt awaiting instructions from the Communist Party.
3. The merger of the two parties into the POR occurred because, with the coup d'etat of 14 December, which resulted in the ousting of the Castaneda regime, both the POD and the PAR lost their reasons for existence. The POD was formed early in 1948 as an opposition party to the Castaneda regime, with no presidential candidate of its own. The PAR was formed to promote the presidential candidacy of Col. Menendez, and it is generally conceded that in free elections, it would have elected its candidate. The POD, after Castaneda's downfall, enthusiastically supported the revolutionary Junta government. The PAR found itself without any particular objectives whatever.
4. Dr. Mario Hector Salazar, who was named Sub-secretary of Interior in the new Salvadoran government Junta, was the leading member of the professional sector and the leader in the fight against the Communists. In view of his new position he withdrew from active participation in the POD and his place was taken by Napoleon Rodriguez Ruiz. According to Dr. Salazar, the fight against Communists in the POD has not been dropped, but the urgency for removing them is not so great. Dr. Salazar argues that a permanent political party such as the POD can become is a necessary development for the country. The POD leaders in the professional sector desire to build a liberal party which can combat Communism realistically by offering those classes to which Communism has greatest appeal more than Communism can offer. For this reason

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they hesitate to break openly with the Communists because it is through the Communists that they are drawing labor elements into the party.

5. While this idealistic thinking is going on among the professionals, the Communists are making strides in the other sectors. There have been several meetings of the POD at which the professional sector has hardly been represented at all. An Executive Committee has been formed as follows:
labor: A. R. Alvayero, Napoleon Villacorta; Students: Ulises Flores, Jorge Arias Gomez, Julio Eduardo Villalta; Women: Julia Herodier, Tula Alvaranga, Angelina Trigueros. It is noted that the professional sector is not as yet represented on the Executive Committee.

6. A fiscal plan has been drawn up, according to which dues will be collected monthly on the following basis:

Workers (male and female)--forty centavos
Students, commercial employees, and women
(not female workers--1 colon
Professionals--2 colones.

Persons who occupy positions in the government will be asked to pay two per cent of their salaries.

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